01
VOLUME
01
ISSUE
JANUARY 2013

celebrating the joys of submission!

radiance

LIVING AND LOVING THE RADIANT YOUNG MUSLIM LIFESTYLE

MONTHLY YOUTH MAGAZINE

PKR 100 . USD 5
GBP 3 . DHS 15

Heaven Highs
Drifting with the twinkling stars

Budding Orchids
What to wear to a friend's house?

Storynory
The guilty one

Dear Diary
My friend's last look

Homework Helper
Mathematics mastermind

Voice of the united Muslim youth

In the name of Allah, the most magnificient, the most merciful.

Al-Quran

"And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. *(65:2-3)*

sneak a peek

Al-Hadeeth

"The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam said, "Whoever possesses the following three qualities will have the sweetness (delight) of faith: 1. The one to whom Allah and His Apostle becomes dearer than anything else. 2. Who loves a person and he loves him only for Allah's sake. 3. Who hates to revert to Atheism (disbelief) as he hates to be thrown into the fire." - *Bukhari*

Al salamu aleykum warahmatullahu wabarakatuh

A very warm welcome to all our new friends.

Once upon a time, there wasn't a toy known as the cell phone. Nor was there any Internet, Facebook, Twitter, chatrooms, blogs, WhatsApp, and hey, you name it. Fast-forward to today, every day we are swamped with unbounded pressures from not only all those mentioned above but also from our never-ending studies, peers, career and lesser ways to let go off that steam of tension and frustration building inside us. And if that wasn't enough, we are asked to ponder over the tornado-trodden state of our bedrooms, as well as over our sanities, not to mention the entire world's sanity too; people dying, widespread panic, sovereignty under question, faith being challenged, absolutes being created and so on and so forth.

But before you get all huffy about that, brow-knitters, allow me to hastily pour in the good news: we teenagers all have our own worlds. Our own little worlds... full of hopes and dreams. Our bittersweet worlds, with a combination of happiness, sadness, success and failures... well, no one ever told you that life is going to be that way.

So here is a place which connects all our worlds together: "Radiance", which captures the diverse interests of our teens by inviting them to sit back, relax, and enjoy their odyssey through stories that are not only premium and gripping but also have an element of fun and fancy to them. We share and let go off steam...but more importantly we celebrate and inspire our Muslim identity, for after all, we are the radiant young Muslims; living and loving our Muslim lifestyle.

The magazine is the first to give a voice and a compass to teenage Muslims navigating their faith while tackling the universal issues of adolescence. I remember searching high and low for such a teen's magazine for myself, something that would explain the real practicalities of living as a young Muslim by reading experiences of practicing teens' lives that would show me the teachings and sign of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and our Beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, as well as grant me many like-minded friends, for such buddies boost our chances of keeping our faiths intact and strong. Such literature, I was sure, would cut years off my learning curve and make it easier to save myself from going down dead-end roads and making countless expensive mistakes which I was witnessing others around me so simply involved in, together those activities that tend to be of the dodgy not-very-halal kind.

But alas, except for some publications abroad (and those too mostly dealing with life in the west), I found none in my own part of the sphere. I felt pity for myself, as much as I felt pity for all the others stepping into their teenage life. But when there is Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala to help you, and prestigious Ulema like Hadhrat Abdul Sattar Hafizahullah who day in and day out are painstakingly concerned for the redemption of the ills of the Ummah, then under their dazzling shine everything acquires the shadow of their beaming and blooming radiance. Such Muslim leaders are the magnets for success who help our youth open their eyes and make them realise that there is much more to themselves, and to life, than their shallow routine of chasing after the current fad.

We have to recognise that teenage isn't a playtime; it's the stepping-stone towards the rest of our lives. Thus it greatly hurts when instead of defining youth as a stage of life for high aspiration, productive work and achievement, it is attributed for a disconcerting and disappointing trend: selfishness, self-centredness, and almost total obliviousness to the world around them. And despite the self-absorption, there is still a lack of proper sense of self and strong identity.

Radiance, showcasing the realities of our young Ummatis and encouraging them to greater heights. Radiance, the voice of the Muslim youth united as a team to muse mankind by sprinkling the magic dust of inspiration. Radiance, living and loving the radiant young Muslim lifestyle.

If you ask what they want to do in future, a five year old would most probably be able to give an answer. Ask the same question to a pre-teen or young teen, and you're more likely to be answered with a blank expression, a careless shrug, and a muttered, "I dunno."

Frankly, most of these youngsters don't even know who they are… forget about who they are as Muslims, they don't even know their own personalities. Much of the time they're just swept up in the latest trends and follow the fickle crowd without thinking about whether they actually like the items they're wasting their money on, or the activities that they throw themselves into just because it's what the so-called-cool kids do .

Our youth need to be invited away from all the clamouring, glamorous outside influences and given the space and time to focus on themselves, on who they are. Have them look deep within themselves, that space where they keep their deepest thoughts and desires, their hopes and fears, their darkest secrets, and then through this consistent soul-searching they'll be able to allow Islam to reach the gourmet standard in their lives instead of just tumbling it as a side dish.

We have a group of youth who have so much potential, who could be the next great leaders of this Ummah, the likes of Muhammad bin Qasim. Our youth can be – and will be, insha'Allah – strong and free, secure in their identities as Muslims, in their submission to Allah, that they will be empowered to become the next generation of movers and shakers, those who will improve the state of this Ummah in every field.

Just a little direction away from the distractions of this dunya, they'll give up anything for the fulfillment of an Ultimate vision, for they well recognise that the compensation they would receive from their Lord in return would be better than anybody's greatest and grandest of imaginations.

So does the fire in your young minds crave the realest truth? For just like our stomachs, it too needs food. Do you refuse to be lost enough to play the fool as Satan, the busy guy, keeps trying to delude? Then come with us. You'll know, you'll just know, what is all about.

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The advent of this magazine was indeed a very spiritual journey for all of us; full of emotions, passion and gratification. Hope you too enjoy this maiden voyage and come out refreshed having felt the sensation of its sparkling, soothing Radiance.

So over to you, dear reader.
We'll be looking forward to your valued comments and feedback.
Send them at editor.radiance@gmail.com

Binte Zahid

amar bill maroof wa nahee anil munkir

My friend's last look

Want to sneak a peek into the personal diary of a teenager girl? *Hajra Aslam Motiwala* is here with one. A fictitious page from a teen's dairy

3rd January 2013, Thursday

Dear Diary,

I opened my accounting text book, as thick as a slice of chocolate fudge cake. Even though I was in no mood to study, I HAD to; exams were just two days away. I gazed longingly at my laptop and decided to take just one slight peek at facebook. Just to check who is online. That's it, nothing else, I vowed to myself and logged in. Online: Enaya Aman. Enaya was still online. But so were half a dozen of my other class mates. How could they still be there and not studying? Every hour I checked, they were online, engaged in some or the other activity. I glanced back at my I-need-to-lose-weight text book and reluctantly logged out to study.

4th January 2013, Friday

Today at school I had dark circles and a sour mood. I had studied till late night and it didn't help that many of my class mates had been online till midnight having fun. I glanced at the faces of Enaya and the rest of her friends. They looked bright and fresh as ever! I moped that whole day.

5th January 2013, Saturday

Finally, the day of exam arrived. Don't think that I am making a big deal out of one paper, for it was not just an accounting paper. It was of advanced financial reporting which only a few passed in one attempt. After the routine announcement we were handed out question and answer sheets. Thanks to Allah, in return for my hard work, I did not find the paper as difficult as I thought of it to be. I just wanted to take one last look at Enaya and her peers, to see how they found the paper. Enaya looked as calm and cool as ever. To my astonishment, she bent down skillfully and took out a number of chits from her socks. I glanced at the two examiners; they were not looking in her direction. I turned my attention back to my paper. Enaya was sitting across me. She was tapping her feet lightly and stole casual glances at the examiners. She saw me looking at her and winked at me. Let me tell you here, I have always been a little jealous of Enaya, she was so rich, chic and good looking. I smiled back at her thinking how easy life was for Enaya. "Hey you!" The sharp voice made both me and Enaya jump! The look on Enaya's face showed that she was shocked and was not expecting a third examiner to come in from the back door of the exam room. Needless to say, that was one of the worst days of Enaya's life. Her paper was cancelled and she was banned from taking exams for three years. When she was being ushered out of the exam room she looked back at me. That last look which she gave me, I can't still get it out of my mind. She said nothing, but her look said it all. But what did it say? I keep trying to figure out …

Why did I not ask Enaya to study when I saw her online 24/7? Why did I not shake my head at her when she winked at me? Why did I smile at her when she looked my way instead of signaling her not to cheat? The Quranic verse *amar bill maroof wa nahee anil munkir* (adjoin what is good and forbid evil) asks all of us to invite people towards goodness and forbid them from committing bad deeds. If only we can live this verse in our lives, the world would be a better place where each individual can admonish the other from committing wrong and instead encourage them towards all that is good.

word jumble

Unscramble the words below using the given clues.

SHAHBAA - *Friends*

HARMMUAR - *A month*

AUSHR - *A part of Quran*

NDAHAIM - *Name of a city*

ABAJRB - *One of Allah's name*

ANDIOSEIN - *An Islamic country*

s r e w s n A

Sahabah - Muharram
Madinah - Surah - Jabbar
Indonesia

INTEREST!NG FACTS

The following English words are borrowed from Arabic: Algebra, Zero, Cotton, Sofa, Rice, Candy, Safron, Balcony, and even 'Alcohol' derives from Arabic, al-kuhl, meaning powder. These are just a few mentioned here.

The roof top of our Prophet's Masjid in Madinah is designed to be strong enough to carry additional floors in the future.

Prominent Kuffar like Abu Jahl would secretly listen to the verses of the Holy Quran because they were fascinated by it.

According to Islamic governments there are over 1.2 billion Muslims in the world today. The Muslim population of Russia alone is over 50 million. In other words, at least one out of every six persons in the world is Muslim, which is one of the major reasons why ...

... the name "Muhammad" is the most common name in the world today *Alhamdulillah.*

riddles

How are prisoners and astronauts alike?
They are both interested in outerspace.

How do you catch a squirrel?
Climb a tree and act like a nut.

A father's child, a mother's child, yet no one's son.
A Daughter.

A boy fell off a 100 foot ladder. But he did not get hurt. Why not?
He fell off the bottom step.

A cowboy rode to an inn on Friday. He stayed two nights and left on Friday. How could that be?
His horse was called Friday.

youth in action
"As for those who strive in Our way, We will certainly take them onto Our paths, and indeed Allah is with those who are good in deeds."
(Surah AL Ankabut, 69)
الطيبات
AT TAYYABAAT
A Weekend Islamic Learning Program in English for Young Ladies
In a world ravaged by rampant disharmony and mislaid notions of peace, a weekend program of Fahm-e-deen for young girls reminds us it really needn't be that way. Mayera Tufail shares her feelings about this course that she is enrolled at
A Program of Markaz Fahm-e-Deen

There was a lush green hill ahead, the skies were blue, I could feel the saturated wind touching my face. Exotic scenery lay ahead, "Is this real?" I thought to myself.

It felt like I was already there. Suddenly the ground began to shake, the beautiful scene before me began to blur. I felt a strong hand on my shoulder trying to shake me. "It's five minutes to ten, wake up Mayera, we have to rush!"

The dream ended as abruptly as it had begun; I got up with a bolt. I was, as usual, in my bedroom on earth, where else would I be. My sister had already gone to get ready; I dashed to my cupboard, grabbed my dress and locked myself shut in the restroom. I picked up my brush and put it against my teeth, pushing it back and forth, repeating the grand ritual I did every morning. With the face wash still stuck on my face and the flavour of the tangy mint still in my mouth, I began to put on my dress. "The right sleeve first", I thought, I always forget. I felt the hardcore cold water hit my face as I splashed through. I stepped outside, "Oh shoot, the right feet first and recite the *dua*." I looked at the clock, it struck 10 am; I had to rush so I decided to put on my shoes in the car.

I reach the madrassa on time; leaving my slippers outside I rush upstairs. As I open the door and take a peek inside, our teacher smiles. I sit back and enjoy her lecture, "Yeah I am home!" I think. The early morning struggle on Saturday was all worth it.

At-tayyabaat is an English Islamic learning weekend program devised for young girls to equip themselves with the basic knowledge of their *deen* through the various courses of fiqh, tafseer, tajweed etc that are part of the program. The girls are divided into three groups according to their ages.

This program also gets to be a means where they could revitalise their judgments of the erroneous outlook of the west regarding the conservative nature of Madrassahs that these children and teenagers have taken and infused in themselves. I interviewed a few people, and here is what they have to say:

"At-tayyabaat is a course for children, teens and young women where they are taught to become better Muslims. It's all in a very friendly environment which makes one want to attend it regularly to revive their long forgotten knowledge as well as their passion for Islam. It makes one forget about the rest of the world and raise a desire in their hearts of creating a bond with Allah Ta'ala for eternity. It is three full hours of peace that one gets just by being present at the gathering of At-tayyabaat."

Moniba Abdul Jabbar

"This is the only authentic Islamic atmosphere provided for girls like me who don't have a command in Urdu language; for this course provides the comfortable environment to gain an understanding of our *deen* in English as compared to the courses I have enrolled in over the years that were conducted in Urdu. I still feel the pain of having left the three year Islamic learning course and the only reason being that I did half of my paper in English, not being able to express myself well in Urdu, even though I had learned the subject matter. Over here, I commend the simple lectures relaying essential information about Islam for girls who come from modern families with little Islamic backgrounds or for girls who are more familiar with English rather than Urdu. The division of classes into fiqh, tafseer, tajweed and surprisingly an introduction to journalism and a Book Club, portrays recognition of the interests of the girls nowadays."

Hafsa Kamal

"It is a wonderful course devised for young girls. It is fun and ideally designed for teenage girls. We are given lectures every Saturday on how to integrate Islam in everyday of our lives and become good practicing Muslims. After our tarbiah and tajweed classes we also get tasty treats every day of the course. We also socially connect with girls of our age and our mindset which is a truly refreshing experience Alhamdulillah."

Mahil Tufail

Being teenagers we struggle everyday of our lives on how to avoid satanic temptations and bring Islam into our lives but the beauty of this course is that it helps us to do that wonderfully. The credit surely goes to our teachers and the incharge of the course who ceaselessly worked and planned for this program several months before its inception. They have designed this course with great pains to maintain our interest and are indeed doing a fantastic job at it that can be felt in the positively changing lifestyle of the girls who enrolled in it and the utter zeal with which they are continuing.

The war within our hearts

by Mayera Tufail

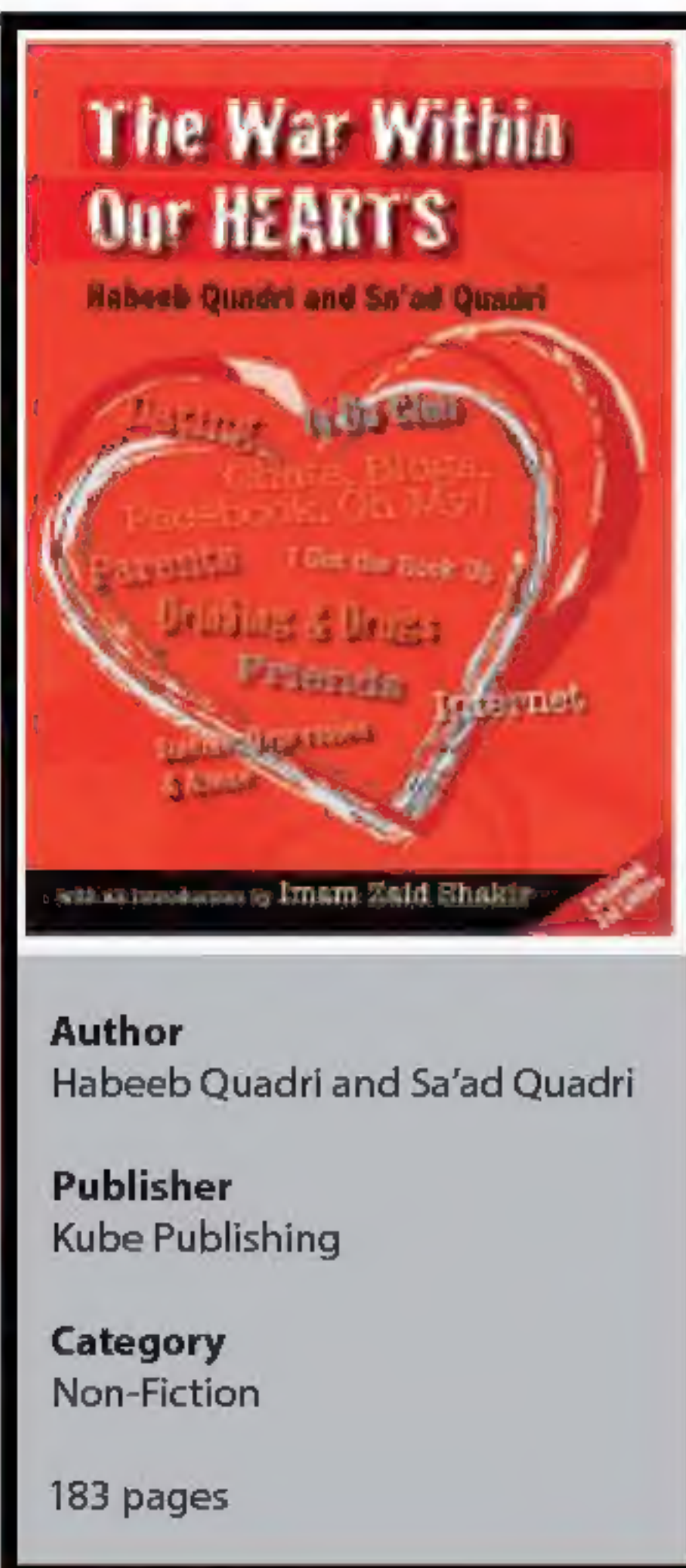
From time to time I come across books that I wish I would have read earlier. Books that would have helped me develop my self-identity and answered many of the burning questions that confused my mind. The War Within Our Hearts is one such book that I encountered recently. It's filled with almost all the kinds of questions young adults have these days. And it gives the answers too, realistically from an Islamic viewpoint, without being preachy and overbearing. Today we find very few books in the market quite like this for Muslim teens and early adults.

The book is divided into two main parts; the first part outlines problems and challenges facing young people in today's world whilst the second part presents solutions. Each chapter in the book comes with attractive titles, using the language which teenagers commonly use these days. So there is "In Da Club" which is a chapter on partying, "Who is Dat?" which is a chapter about lowering your gaze and ""I've Been Thinkin' About You" which looks at the importance of *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah). Other interesting chapter titles include "The Deadliest Weapon" which concerns guarding what we say (i.e. use of the tongue), "I Can't Fight This Feeling Anymore" which is about suicide, depression and abuse and "See You at the Crossroads" which looks at why we must remember death.

Each chapter takes its flavour from its title. Issues, problems and concerns are examined in most cases from the young person's point of view and also from the parent's point of view. This lends a balance to the discussion.

In an age of growing insecurity, violence, and war, Muslims often tend to overlook the wars being fought on the home front; that is, The war within our hearts. One of the most dangerous elements in a war is fighting an enemy who is knowledgeable of our weaknesses.

The problem is further complicated when our enemies operate in such a covert manner that we are unaware of their tactics and plan of attack. Such is the state of our daily confrontations with our greatest enemies: Satan (the devil) and our *nafs* (carnal desires).

TheWar Within Our Hearts was written with the purpose of showing Muslim youth that they are not alone in the problems they are facing today. As integration and assimilation to society is increasing within the Muslim community, youth are battling a variety of enemies that were not faced by their parents. By recognising that these problems are not unique to an individual but are common place for Muslim youth today, this book addresses certain issues which would have otherwise been avoided. Although this book does not necessarily provide answers to all issues, the goal is to provide a platform for us to begin dialogue on these issues in order to get closer to our Creator.

Author
Habeeb Quadri and Sa'ad Quadri

Publisher
Kube Publishing

Category
Non-Fiction

183 pages

> *"There is a great deal in the book that would help bolster a young person's self-esteem and self-identity as a Muslim.*

Quotes from the Qur'an and Ahadeeth occur throughout the book. Stories from the life of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, his companions and the Prophets are used to illustrate a point and are seamlessly integrated into the text. A box at the end of each chapter provides helpful summaries of the main action points or reminders to note.

I wished there were more examples of the author's experiences aside from the few that I read. I think the stories that are interspersed in the text really brought the message home that the authors, like readers had challenging times. But a book like The War Within Our Hearts also needs a great deal more examples of youth struggling and striving in varying situations. Results from interviews or surveys with Muslim youth could have added another dimension to the book.

This book is a must-read for all Muslim teenagers and interestingly, even adults into their late 20's will find much within the pages of this book that would speak to them. There is a great deal in the book that would help bolster a young person's self-esteem and self-identity as a Muslim. This is also the kind of book every teacher, counselor, imam and leader involved with youth could derive help from. I definitely recommend this as a book to initiate discussion in Islamic Studies classes within full-time Islamic or weekend Islamic schools, as well as in homes between parents and children.

The world in your hands

It is said that if we spend our whole life thanking Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala for the blessings he has granted us, it will yet not remove us from His debt for His blessings are innumerous. Our entire body is a great blessing from Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and thus we ought to take care of it.

by HAMster

HANDS - Our hands are also a very delicate part of our body. There are few things you should know:
With a little care, hands can be a thing of beauty rather than something to hide. Our hands have the same personality traits as the skin on our face. The hands are also an exposed part of the body and can give our age away. The skin on the back of our hands is very soft and thin. Bulging veins can be made to disappear by making a habit of holding your hands up. Hands take much punishment every day, battered by dirt, grease and detergents. So won't you do what you can to keep them pretty?

What we can do

*Wear rubber gloves whenever washing dishes or doing any dirty job.
*If you are doing household job for long hours then wear gloves, but take them off every hour and rinse your hands and also gloves under cold water. Acids from perspiring hands inside gloves can cause harm to nails.
*Cleanse hands by creaming them instead of washing them, wipe them dry with tissues. Keep hand cream or lotion near wash basin so that you get in the habit of creaming hands after every wash.
*While relaxing, soak your hands in warm water, warm almond or olive oil. It's good for the nails too.
*Never warm icy hands over fire or plunge them into hot water to thaw them, let them warm up gradually.
*Apply lemon to your elbows, ankles, and knees to remove the dirt that has seeped in, leaving them whiter and softer.

Home remedy for hand beautification

Functions Softens, nourishes & beautifies

Suggestions To be used before bed time

Ingredients Glycerin or Vaseline, Rose water.

Directions Take glycerin and rose water in equal quantities. Apply the mixture before bedtime and wear slightly large cotton gloves. In the morning you will see the difference to your hands. Do this daily or every alternate day, especially during winters.

story nory
The

"How many boxes have been packed?" He asked his fellow worker and friend Nadir. "Thirty", Nadir replied after consulting the papers attached to his tiny clipboard. They were standing inside the storage room of C.A.P factory. His name was Shahab, and he worked in the outbound logistics department of C.A.P, which was a manufacturing industry. His duty was to ensure that the packaging of goods was done efficiently before sending it to the cargo company which supplied these goods to West Africa. Feeling very tired, Shahab checked his watch; it struck 8 pm. His job contract was for a 9 to 5 job but daily his manager made him work till 8 pm or more. After another tiresome day, he headed home.

As usual, his wife was ready with bills of electricity, gas and grocery. His children were ready with list of demands for toys, gadgets and school supplies. His creditor called him almost daily for repayment of a loan he took years ago. Once again, Shahab barely ate that night; he certainly had to find a job with a better pay. Everyone was fast asleep, except Shahab. After spending some restless minutes in his bed, he quietly came out of his room, then left his house and walked down the street. A dimly lit hotel attracted his attention; he went in and ordered a cup of coffee. He was halfway through his coffee when a tall broad man shadowed him. "Come on!" he said and nodded towards a man sitting at a far end table. Confused Shahab looked at the broad man and then at the man towards which the broad man had nodded. "Where?" he asked. "There. Hash is waiting for you," the man said and walked towards Hash expecting Shahab to follow him. Not knowing what to do, Shahab followed him. He found Hash sitting on his chair. Another chair was pulled near where Hash had propped his thick legs. A man similar to the broad man was standing alert besides Hash. Both the broad men looked like Hash's body guards. "Hello Saqib, sit down. As you may have guessed, I am Hash and these men are my body guards" Hash explained without sitting straight or extending his hand. 'Why would this man, Hash, need body guards?' Shahab wondered and cleared his throat, "Sorry Hash, you are mistaking me with someone else, my name is Shahab and not Saqib," Shahab said.Hash looked surprised. "Oh, I was supposed to meet a man, Saqib here, who had told me that he will be sitting at the table where you were sitting." Just as Shahab was standing up to leave,

> "I do have men there. You are a smart man. Welcome to my mob Shahab.

Hash's cell phone rang. Hash received it with his right hand and with his left hand he gestured Shahab to sit down. What does he want from me now? Shahab was slightly annoyed. He didn't know this fat man who had no manners to sit properly in front of strangers and also had body guards. He heard Hash utter a gasp. Hash clicked his phone shut and turned to his body guards," Saqib was killed by police when he was coming here, we have to leave this place immediately," he told them. One of the body guards ran to the parking area and soon started a black tinted jeep. Hash turned to his other body guard, "Dan, bring Shahab along, or he will tell the police that we were here and report our car's model." "Hey hey no!" Shahab started to protest but he was dragged into the car by Dan's strong hands. Soon the jeep was heading towards a destination not known by Shahab.

"Where are you taking me, let me go. I will not tell the police, believe me. I don't care what you have been up to," Shahab turned to Hash. "Not even if I tell you that I run a mafia mob? And smuggle illegal goods like heroine to other countries?" Hash asked him savagely. "No!" Shahab stared in Hash's eyes. Hash's expression changed, "Will you like to work for me? I need a replacement for Saqib anyway. Before you say no, I need you to think that you will be paid more than you can ever imagine, you will be swimming in money," Hash continued. Shahab became all very thoughtful, "What will I have to do?" he asked. "Smuggle heroin packets," Hash said casually. "I work in the packaging department of C.A.P factory. I can smuggle it easily to West Africa. If you have your men there." Shahab answered just as easily. Money was what he needed. "I do have my men there. You are a very smart man. Welcome to my mob Shahab," Hash shook his hand. "Thank you Hash." Shahab smiled rather warmly when Hash handed him a bundle of dollars.

Continued...

mystery mania

Muhammad Hassan and the Snack Game.

Boost your brain power through this mystery teaser below and have fun figuring out what ensued based on the given clues.

by HAMster

Muhammad Hassan loved potato chips almost as much as he loved juices. The problem was when he had large family gatherings; all the kids would devour his snacks before he could. His marble game worked for a while, but his trick was soon found out. So, Hassan came up with another way to keep the snacks for himself and yet make it seem as though he wasn't the greedy snack hog he was. Hassan took two large bowls, one wood and one plastic and placed them up high so that the kids couldn't see the contents.

He then said,

"One is full and the other is empty. You get whatever is in the bowl you pick. You can pick only once, but you must decipher my clues and explain to me which bowl you think has the chips and why. And no random guessing allowed."

He then gave them these clu

- The polyester shirt I'm wearing.
- A cotton shirt in my closet.
- A hollow cardboard toilet paper roll.
- An empty paper lunch bag
- The plastic cup I'm drinking tea from
- The acrylic socks I 'm wearing

HINT
Which items are full and which are empty?

What do the clues have in common with each other and the bowls?

answer on page 22

Azaan, the answer to my prayer

by Saba Ahmed

Chaos and shudders, burden on shoulders,

A heavy heart and matters to ponder,

Helpless cries with endless complaints,

With duty calls, commitments claim,

Every night in bed I wept away.

No sign of peace to sway me away,

Is every life full of such grief and pain?

Lost in the rat race, yet found no gain!

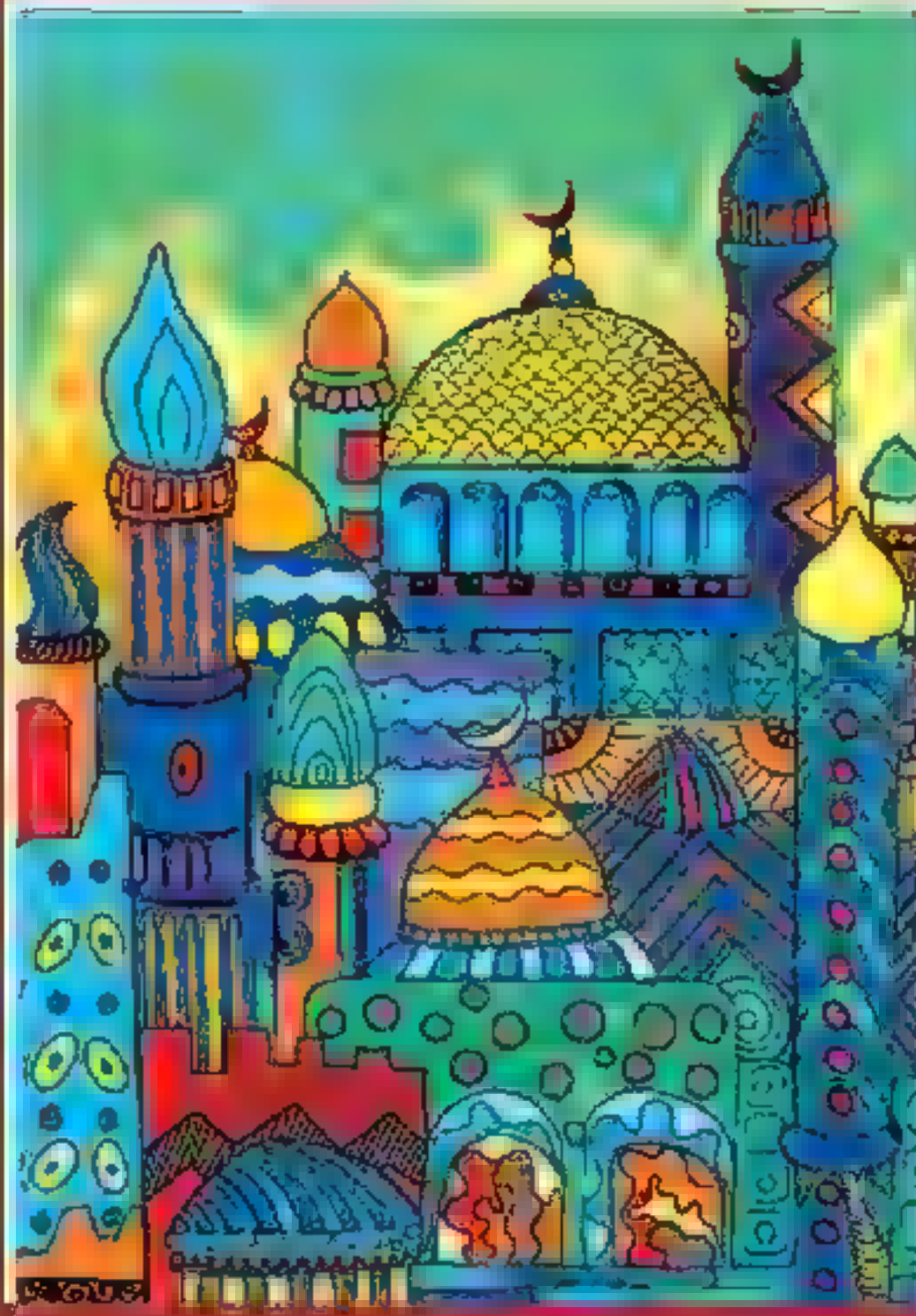
My life was full; it was having its blast,

But my soul was empty, buried in cast.

Then one night, yet again a sea of dread,

Led me up till the break of dawn.

Then a wakeup call like never before,

A refresh button ushered my past life away.

My ears all numb and my mind drifted away,

For the sound I heard was a call to pray.

Hesitant at first, but thought it's worth the wake,

I guess I'm lucky I took a chance on fate.

I took a chance to say my prayer.

How blind was I, how deaf was my each ear,

Each time I heard the Azaan, my body sprung to pray.

That one night of desperate cry, my Lord heard my prayer,

Each night I sleep, but it's different from before,

For my past dreadful life has walked out the door.

That sole call to betterment, for my sake to pray,

The answers to a peaceful life I get five times a day.

Dark night
with its glowing moon,
As roused my poetic mind.
I think I will not be sleeping soon,
As this night is one of a kind.
Stars have climbed out of their hideout,
They twinkle as if waving me hi.
If give them a happy shout,
And stand on my toes wanting to fly.
Cool breeze plays with my hair,
I feel shivers in my spine.
Fly away many white doves I pair,
I wish their wings were mine.
I am going to lie awake all night,
How pretty but ahhh lonely can it be?
I stare at the sky as far as I might,
The moon smiles saying it's
awake with me…

The most exalted children

Lets delight in Umm Muhammad's love for the Holy Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam's offsprings

I once had a teacher who I truly adored. My love for her knew no bounds and thus this intense liking kept a desire ablaze that I somehow get to know all about her. Is she married? Does she have children? What are her parents like? What is her favourite dish? Her favourite colour? Her heartiest desire?

I am sure many of you too must be having some ideal personalities and favourites about whom you want to know all you can. However, when it comes to our love for our Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam we hardly find ourselves exhibiting such restlessness concerning knowing all about his family, his likes, dislikes etc. What a pity indeed! For how he used to keep crying for us, asking forgiveness for his Ummah. He could have asked mercy from Allah for his children only, his parents, or his wives only. However, he didn't ask for any of them, but instead asked for you and me. So aren't we even interested in knowing about his very own children and grandchildren, the most exalted children of all the worlds?

Ofcourse we are, for we surely love our beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, as well as all those whom he loved, which include his offsprings in particular. Furthermore, how can we follow or even relate to someone if we don't know much about their life?

Children of the holy & beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam

The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam and Khadijah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala had six children – four daughters and two sons. The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam also had a son with Maria Radhi Allahu Ta'ala. Sadly all the sons of the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, Abdullah, Qasim and Ibrahim died in infancy.

Zainab Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was the eldest of the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam's four daughters. She married her first cousin Abul 'Aas Radhi Allahu Ta'ala who was the son of her maternal aunt Hala Radhi Allahu Ta'ala. He hadn't accepted Islam at the time of the marriage but was always a loving and devoted husband to Zainab Radhi Allahu Ta'ala and good son-in-law to the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. Zainab Radhi Allahu Ta'ala experienced many hardships in her life, including being severely wounded for her love and support of Islam.

Ruqaiyyah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was the second eldest daughter of the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. Her first marriage to Utba ended in divorce after his father, the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam's uncle Abu Lahab, forced him to divorce her. Her second marriage was to Uthman Radhi Allahu Ta'ala who himself experienced cruel torture from the non-believers. Ruqaiyyah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was a very virtuous lady who endured many hardships courageously. She was only in her early twenties when she passed away.

Umm-e-Kulthum Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was the second youngest daughter of the Holy Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. Like Ruqaiyyah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala she too was first married to Abu Lahab's son, the youngest Utaiba, but like his brother he divorced his young wife at the order of his parents. After the death of Ruqaiyyah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala, the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam gave Umm-e-Kulthum Radhi Allahu Ta'ala's hand in marriage to Uthman Radhi Allahu Ta'ala. They both shared an exemplary marriage but were only together for a few years when Umm-e-Kulthum Radhi Allahu Ta'ala became ill and passed away.

Fatima Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam's youngest daughter and shared a very close relationship with her father. She was a very hard working and noble woman and despite herself being very poor, she was always very generous to others. The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam gave her hand in marriage to his cousin Ali Radhi Allahu Ta'ala, the son of his uncle Abu Talib. Fatima Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam's only living child at the time of his death, but she passed away shortly after in the month of Ramadan. The Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam stated Fatima Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was one of the four most perfect, spiritual and exalted ladies in the world.

Grandchildren of the beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam

Zainab Radhi Allahu Ta'ala had two sons and a daughter. One of her sons died in infancy but her other son Ali Radhi Allahu Ta'ala shared a close relationship with his grandfather, the Holy Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. Her daughter Umama Radhi Allahu Ta'ala was also close to her grandfather who often spoilt her with gifts.

Ruqaiyyah Radhi Allahu Ta'ala with her husband Uthman Radhi Allahu Ta'ala had a son Abdullah but he died at a young age.

Fatima Radhi Allahu Ta'ala and Ali Radhi Allahu Ta'ala, who later became the fourth Caliph of Islam, had six children: Hassan, Hussain, Mohsin, Ruqaiyyah, Umm-e-Kulthum and Zainab. Sadly, Mohsin and Ruqaiyyah died in childhood. Hassan and Hussain were particularly close to the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam who dearly loved them. Through both his appearance and character Hassan Radhi Allahu Ta'ala often reminded others of the Prophet Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam.

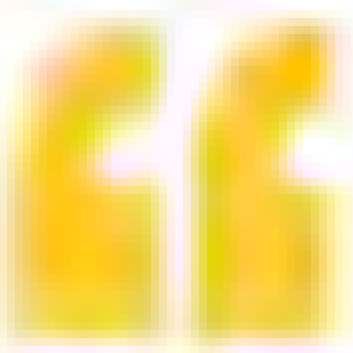
Drifting with the twinkling stars

Bint Saleem shares the lessons she learned while pondering over some of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala's signs spread around us. A reflection on growing faith. It all happened one gloomy summer evening.

Feeling completely depressed, I sat outside on the front steps of my house, overlooking the lush garden that stretched ahead of me. The sky was a beautiful shade of blue and rosy pink, with specks of clouds dispersed here and there in unusual hues. It was a beautiful sight and with the *azaan* of maghrib echoing in the background, the scene was just perfect making anyone who believes in Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala cry out that all praises are to Him, the magnificent, the absolutely merciful.

But I was too depressed for that. I looked up at the sky and I questioned Allah, why me? You created everything perfect but why created me with so many problems that I can't deal with? They might be insignificant as compared to what some other people go through but I thought You loved me 70 times more than my mother and she wouldn't make me so unhappy or make me cry so much.

My endless complaining to my Lord was interrupted when our watchman entered the door; I quickly covered my face but remained sitting watching him. He switched the lights on and I was suddenly struck by the realisation that even the lights don't function on their own, someone has to switch them on and off as per need. So how am I so ungrateful and so oblivious to the fact that my Allah causes day and night to happen every single day and I fail to recognise that it's not merely the earth rotating on its axis. It's Allah who is doing it. And that He is there, He is everywhere; why do I keep on forgetting and drowning in the depths of self pity when my Rabb who has promised to help the believers is there for me. Those countless verses in the Holy Quran about changing of night and day are signs for those who reflect, struck me.

Then the guard laid down his prayer mat and began his maghrib salah; I watched him pray, just like the countless times during the day I have seen him reading the Quran. Not that looking at non-mehrams is okay but I'm generally fascinated and impressed by him and looking at him makes me rethink the hadeeth in my head that poor people will go to Paradise 70,000 years before the rich ones. He seems so content. Praying five times with the azaan, reading the Quran, earning *halal*, and observing the correct Islamic appearance.

It was a beautiful sight and with the azaan of maghrib echoing in the background, the scene was just perfect making anyone who believes in Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala cry out that all praises are to Him, the magnificent, the absolutely merciful.

He probably has a gazillion reasons to complain too (much more than me I'm sure); he is away from his family, he earns so less, he has to sit in the sun all day but yet he is so close to Allah. He makes the best out of the time he has when sitting; instead of watching TV like the other male servants in the house, he chooses to read the Quran, he chooses to pray instead of goofing around with the other khans, he chooses to work even a menial job instead of begging on the street like countless others and probably that is why he is so content because Allah says in the Quran, "Surely in Allah's remembrance do hearts find peace." (13:28)

To tell you the truth, I have literally everything that a person can desire; I am young, healthy, married into a well-off family, have a son and a decent husband and amazing in-laws and family *Alhamdulillah* and yet I lack happiness and contentment and am bitter all the time and that just makes me think why!

And the simple answer to that is because instead of trying to please and love the Creator, I am trying to please the creation and myself. I am trying to find love in the wrong place, satisfaction in the wrong things, for peace lies in Allah's remembrance, true love is to love Allah passionately because no one can love you back the way He does. It's weird because I have known this all along but just realised it all of this very unexpectedly in the most unusual of ways.

As for pleasing people around me, if I just think I have barely spoken to the Khan two words since the time I have been living in my husband's house, but yet I have tremendous admiration and respect for him. He didn't ever try to impress me, but still I admire him, I'm sure you can make out why. Sometimes when I and my mother-in-law look at him reading the Quran, we can't stop praising him and thanking Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala for granting us such a blessed servant who recites Quran in our house every day. We respect him immensely and make dua for him as he is close to Allah and people whom Allah loves, He puts love for them in the hearts of others. My husband would probably laugh his head off if he sees I have written a whole long composition about our watch-man but well, it just flowed.

If we truly ask Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala for help, if we ask Him to show us the way, He will show it to us in the most amazing of ways by removing the veils that our sins have cast over our eyes from recognising our Lord and our purpose in life. Writing this article made me feel closer to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala in one of those most amazing ways…hope reading it helps you too.

The Taste of His love

When Allah grants anyone the taste of His love then no amount of wordly hardship is difficult for him. They all become easy for him because Allah has put in his heart the light of His love. It is the embrace of the Beloved, pleasures of the Beloved, good taste of obedience, delight of supplication and savour of nearness.
The beauty of worldly beings is temporary while Allah's perfection is His Own and Ever Lasting.

Mufti Taqi Usmani Hafizahullah, Spiritual Discourses, Vol-4

Discomfort of leaving sin

The discomfort felt after not committing a sin is like an everlasting feeling of springtime. This discomfort is actually beneficial and more virtuous compared to that feeling of temporary tranquility felt by the *nafs* (self) after committing a sin. The reason behind this is that the curses of Allah descend on the person who acquires *haram* pleasures of the nafs, whereas the mercy of Allah descends on the person who feels discomfort for leaving sins.

Sheikh Muhammad, Ataa-e Rabbaani, pg 34

For the love of reading

Asra Ahmed, 13 years
Convent of Jesus and Mary, Karachi

Sarah was busy watching the television when her mother called her angrily. "What is it?" Sarah yelled back. "I am watching TV."

Her mother sighed as she stood at doorway of their family room. "This is the fourth time I'm telling you to stop watching television, it is bad for your eyes and brain." she said wearily.

"What else am I supposed to do?" Sarah replied touchily.

"Go and read that great book I bought for you yesterday, I don't suppose you have read it yet?"

"Read!" cried Sarah in disbelief as if her mother had asked her to kill a lion.

"Yes go read. 'Reading is a basic tool in the living of a good life." Her mother quoted.

Sarah rolled her eyes and stomped up to her room and tried to look for a book to read. The truth was that Sarah had lots of books but she had never really bothered to read them before. She sighed dramatically and chose a book of short stories just because it seemed small. But alas for Sarah, she found herself quite enjoying the story and had soon finished reading it. Rather unconsciously, she found herself reaching out for another book.

Sarah is a young girl, just like you and me, who lost in the glitz and glamour of the artificial world of TV and games, had lost the love for reading books. But she was lucky to have discovered it at the right time, and I sincerely hope that we too don't hold ourselves back from the great wealth of experiences and adventures that we can derive from reading books.

In today's modern world, thanks to current technologies, reading is considered ancient. But no doubt books have a charm about them which attracts the reader. Books are indeed a man's best friend for they'll entertain you for hours and oh, never hurt you too, unlike some human friends.

I sincerely hope that we too don't hold ourselves back from the great wealth of experiences and adventures that we can derive from reading books.

wears niqab?

doesn't wear heavy makeup

wears hijab that covers nicely?

sports a beard?

is found in the masjid?

wears an imama?

is shy to talk to a non-mahram?

IS IT STRANGE IF SHE

IS IT STRANGE IF HE

doesn't go to mixed parties?

wears minimal perfume?

dons loose, baggy clothing?

leaves gossip even with her best friend?

lowers his gaze?

dons pants above ankles?

doesn't swear even with his best friend?

chooses aakhirah over this material world?

goes to a madrassa?

is she strange?

is he strange?

goes to a madrassa?

chooses aakhirah over this material world?

What to wear to a friend's house?

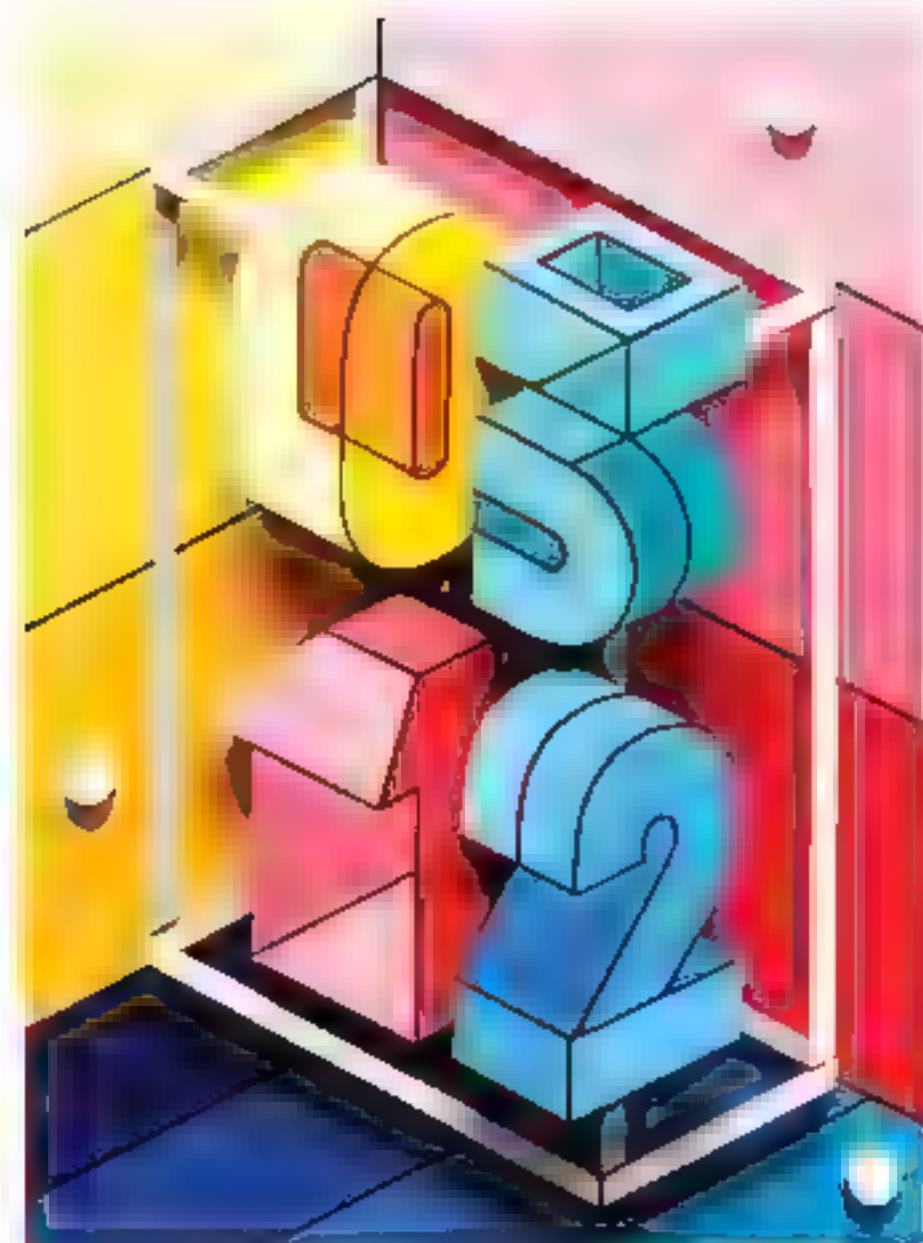
by Naimah Abbasi, 11 years

Boys, as well as girls, will never want to wear *kameez-shalwar* at a friend's party . Why?

They think that it will not look cool and that their friends will make fun of them and think of them as an extremist, who belongs to a backward family. Friends won't respect them at school and will never invite them to their house again.

But hey wait, if people think like that; never consider them as your true friends. Some day you will find good friends and always remember that if you sacrifice anything for Allah, then He will be your greatest friend.

Remember, if we obey Allah, He will become our friend. So you see I have gone through it, but now I have good friends but best of all, Allah is my friend who makes all my worries go away.

Mathematics Mastermind - I

So, whenever confronted by a complicated computation to solve, you are always embarrassed of toying around in your pocket for your calculator or phone to perform complex calculations on its calculator. Fret no more, help is here *Alhamdulillah*... some simple and quick Math tips to make you a mathematics mastermind. Now browse through them and surprise your teachers, parents and peers.

Happy calculating folks

1 *Tough Multiplication*

If you have a large number to multiply and one of the numbers is even, you can easily subdivide to get to the answer.

Example

Multiply 32 with 125

32 x 125

is the same as 16 x 250

is the same as 8 x 500

is the same as 4 x 1000 = 4,000.

2 *Subtracting from 1,000*

To subtract a large number from 1,000 you can use this basic rule - except for the last digit, subtract all digits from 9, and then subtract the last digit from 10

Example

1000-648

Subtract 6 from 9 = 3

Subtract 4 from 9 = 5

Subtract 8 from 10 = 2

352 is your wonderful answer!

3 [illegible]

We all know the trick when multiplying by ten. Add 0 to the end of the number, but did you know there is an equally easy trick for multiplying a two digit number by 11?

Here it Is!

Take the original number and imagine a space between the two digits. In this example we will use 52

5_2

Now add the two numbers together and put them in the middle

5 (5+2) 2

That is it! you have the answer 572.

However if the numbers in the middle add up to a 2 digit number, then just insert the second number and add 1 to the first:

9 (9+9) 9

(9+1) 8 9

10 8 9

1089 – It works every time.

Answer for Muhammad Hassan and the snack game

All the kids were stumped except one young girl who gave the correct answer. The items made from synthetic materials (polyester, plastic, acrylic) all have something in them. The items made from natural materials (cotton, cardboard, paper) are all empty. Therefore the plastic bowl (being synthetic) has the chips and the wood bowl (being natural) is empty. Muhammad Hassan had to hand over the chips and again was left plotting another snack game. But that can be another teaser.

Winter Treats

by Moniba Abdul Jabbar

Creamy hot chocolate

Ingredients

2 ½ tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder , ½ cup sugar, ½ pinch salt, 2 ½ tablespoon boiling water, 2 cups milk, ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract, ¼ cup cream

Directions

Combine cocoa, sugar and salt in a sauce pan and blend them in the boiling water. Bring the mixture to an easy boil while you stir. Simmer and stir for two minutes. Stir in the milk. Heat it but do NOT boil it. Remove from heat and add vanilla essence. Divide between 2 mugs.

add cream on top to cool it to drinking temperature, enjoy your winters!

Dried fruit and nut bites

ingredients

2 cups mixed dried fruit
2 cups raw mixed nuts and seeds
1/3 cup raw sesame seeds
Coarse salt
Cinnamon

directions

In a food processor, beat dried fruit; transfer to a bowl.

Pulse nuts and seeds until finely chopped and add to dried fruit with a dash of cinnamon and a pinch of salt.

Knead together and form 1-inch balls; roll each ball in sesame seeds.

Enjoy the crunch!

comic

Muhammad Ahmed's reality check

by Mayera Tufail

WITHOUT ALLAH SUBHANAHU WA TA'ALA
our week would be

SINDAY
MOURNDAY
TEARSDAY
WASTEDAY
THIRSTDAY
FRIGHTDAY
SHATTERDAY

7 days without
Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala
makes one weak